

# **Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)**

## **Steering Committee Meeting**

January 25, 2008, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
Resources Agency Bldg., Room 1311

### **Draft Meeting Notes**

#### **Associated documents/handouts:**

- Agenda
- Working Groups and Technical Teams Purpose and Scope Statements
- Recommended Working Biological Goals and Objectives
- Analytical Tools Technical Team Draft Purpose and Scope
- Habitat Restoration Technical Team Work Plan
- Conveyance Technical Team Draft Charge and Schedule (paper copy only)
- Draft list of Participants in BDCP Working Groups and Technical Teams (Paper copy only)

#### **Action Items and Key Decisions**

- Logistics will be finalized before the next Steering Committee (SC) meeting for a tour of Delta sites for BDCP members.
- Working groups and technical teams will continue to meet as needed and will coordinate and work closely together on shared issues.
- Other Stressors Conservation Measures Working Group and Water Quality Working Group will be formed by the next SC meeting; SC members should contact management team with suggestions for members.
- Working groups and technical teams should review the draft proposed Biological Goals and Objectives. They should provide feedback to the Biological Goals and Objectives Working Group on how to enhance the goals and objectives' measurability and utility as they relate to the charge of that working group or technical team.
- The Conveyance Working Group will convene technical sub-groups on an as-needed basis to tackle complex topics related to water conveyance and operations planning.

#### **Updates**

- Russ Strach reporting: NOAA-Fisheries received a petition to list *Thaleichthys pacificus* (Eulacon or candlefish), a species of anadromous smelt that historically inhabited waters of the Pacific Northwest including the Delta, under the federal Endangered Species Act. NMFS has accepted the petition and will undertake a status review and make a decision within one year whether to list the species.
- Russ Strach reporting: The BDCP Notice of Intent to commence the NEPA process was published in the Federal Register this week.
- Russ Strach reporting: Fall-run Chinook salmon run monitoring data has been collected and analyzed by NMFS. The run was very low this year. The causes of the decline are not yet clear but could be related to low dissolved oxygen in the Stockton shipping channel and/or to toxicity in the Delta.

- Jerry Johns reporting: BDCP is continuing to stay regularly coordinated with Delta Vision. Jerry Johns will give a short presentation at their meetings next week on behalf of BDCP.
- Jason Peltier reporting: BDCP Delta field trip planning is almost complete. Metropolitan and Westlands are coordinating logistics, including transportation, for a tour of north Delta sites. They will work with Resources to set a date.
- Campbell Ingram reporting: The Nature Conservancy recently added Maurice Hall to their Water Policy staff; he will be contributing to BDCP efforts.

### **Working Groups and Technical Teams Purpose and Scope Statement**

See also Associated Handouts/Documents. The purpose and scope document describes the primary tasks and scope of work of each of the working groups and technical teams. A separate document lists the current membership of those groups and teams. Membership may change based on expertise needed and involvement from each of the caucuses. It is anticipated that groups will work together and coordinate regularly or as necessary. Issues related to flows and water operations will be primarily addressed by the Conveyance Working Group in coordination with other working groups and technical teams.

Draft documents for working group and technical team meetings are sent to the membership of those groups only and not posted on-line. Members of groups and teams are responsible for forwarding materials members of their caucus. The management team will work with SC members who wish to stay updated on those documents between biweekly SC meetings.

### **Biological Goals and Objectives Working Group**

Gary Bobker, Jason Peltier (co-chairs) presenting. The group achieved consensus on a working draft of BDCP Biological Goals and Objectives. SC members are generally comfortable with the proposed goals and support the objectives' direction.

The next steps will be for other working groups and technical teams to review the draft goals and objectives and provide feedback regarding approaches to developing measurable criteria. The goals and objectives are ready to be used by other working groups and technical teams to provide direction to their efforts. These draft goals and objectives are not to be considered "final;" they may be revised as more information becomes available from other working groups/technical teams and these groups provide feedback. Tables detailing the relationships among goals and objectives were not provided as handouts but will be available to SC members and to the working groups and teams that will be reviewing the goals and objectives in the coming weeks.

The biological objectives are currently uneven in their level of detail, and individual species are not specified. Species-specific detail may be added later. The organization of the goals and objectives may also change based on feedback from other working groups and teams.

The Biological Goals and Objectives Working Group will not meet again until they receive feedback from the other working groups and teams on the draft set of goals and objectives.

### **Conveyance Working Group**

Jerry Johns and Ann Hayden (co-chairs) presenting. The group has met once and was productive. They are still working on their detailed scope and direction, but generally will be working on the technical aspects of conveyance and operation criteria. The working group provided a paper handout of their current draft purpose and scope. They plan on convening technical subgroups to guide planning for fish screens, alignment, and other technical topics.

They anticipate needing close coordination between BDCP and other agencies and organizations involved in these issues in the Delta, including the State Water Resources Control Board and the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC). The Nature Conservancy will help coordinate with PPIC since they are working regularly together on related issues. Technical entities such as NMFS engineering office in Santa Rosa can assist with analysis and design of fish screens and other technical issues.

The conversation whether to use the term “hydrodynamics” instead of “flow” is tabled until a later date to give working groups and technical teams a chance to further define their scopes.

### **Implementation Structure/Governance Working Group**

Richard Roos-Collins and Roger Patterson (co-chairs) presenting. The working group met once, discussed their charge, and established a regular meeting time. Jim Monroe (DFG) and Chris Beale (Resources Law Group) will give a presentation for the working group at their meeting later today about implementing agreements.

SC discussed the charge of this working group. The management team noted that an implementing agreement is the legal document that identifies responsibilities under the take permit, whereas the topic of implementing structures is more far-reaching. The topic of potential structures for implementing the BDCP will involve consideration of the roles and responsibilities for carrying out the requirements of the BDCP and identification of an entity or entities that should be responsible for implementing those requirements (e.g., a joint powers authority, conservancy, or other land-use authority). This working group will also consider how the BDCP relates to other planning processes (e.g., Delta Vision).

### **Analytical Tools Technical Team**

Jerry Johns (co-chair) presenting. The team has been meeting regularly. Their scope and purpose are complete. See Associated Handouts/Documents.

A model map developed by CALFED in 2003 was sent out to the team members. The map describes available hydrodynamic models and other Delta-relevant analytical tools.

Next steps for the team include:

- Updating list of models and other tools and providing descriptions of potential uses of each model or analytical tool for BDCP. The list should be complete before the next SC meeting.
- Providing suggestions on how/when to use the science advisors' recommendations that are pertinent to analytical tools.
- Providing suggestions for how the various tools can be used by other working groups and teams.

### **Public Outreach Working Group**

Karla Nemeth and Carl Wilcox (co-chairs) presenting. The contract with Jones and Stokes Associates (JSA) to undertake public outreach on behalf of BDCP was signed. Next week members of the working group will discuss with JSA staff short-term needs and deliverables. Steering Committee members may be contacted by JSA.

The BDCP Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register (see also Updates); The BDCP NEPA and CEQA processes will be the subject of greater focus by this working group, BDCP management team, and federal and state lead agencies.

### **Other Stressors and Water Quality Working Groups**

The Other Stressors Working Group and Water Quality Working Group will be formulated before the next SC meeting. The Other Stressors Working Group's scope will include a range of issues including conservation measures to address invasive species, toxicity, and harvest. The Water Quality Working Group will address issues related to in-Delta water quality. The management team has been receiving input on the structure and scope of these groups; SC members should contact management team members as soon as possible with suggestions on membership to these working groups.

### **Habitat Restoration Technical Team**

Dave Harlow and John Cain (co-chairs) presenting. See also Handouts/Associated Documents. The team is developing a map of restoration opportunity areas where restoration actions could occur and be likely to achieve success. They are prioritizing the type of restoration actions being considered based on known stressors and habitat types, and are discussing prioritization criteria (e.g., ease of implementing or reversing activities). They anticipate applying the DRERIP models to help analyze efficacy of the actions and help prioritize them. They are also using CALFED and other agencies' experiences to identify and overcome barriers to success.

The stressor table developed in 2007 by SAIC is being used as one of the foundation documents for this process and will be modified as appropriate to address new input. The fisheries agencies will review the tables based on DRERIP and their ongoing recovery planning activities.

The Habitat Restoration Team will coordinate with biological goals and objectives, governance, analytical tools, conveyance, and other working groups/technical teams as they move forward.

SC members noted that there are a number of restoration projects in the Delta that are currently stalled, but which BDCP support and/or involvement may be able to jumpstart.

### **Delta Regional Ecosystem Restoration Implementation Program (DRERIP)**

Stuart Siegel presenting a condensed version of the talk on DRERIP Conceptual Models that he gave earlier in the week at the Analytical Tools Technical Team meeting. CD's of the DRERIP models are available for BDCP members.

The DRERIP models are Delta-specific conceptual models based on current scientific knowledge. They provide decision-support for restoration and conservation actions in the Delta. There are models tailored to species, habitats, and processes; they can be used individually or in combination. The models include measures of the level of certainty and they predict impacts and outcomes of actions. Several of the models are complete and ready for use; others will be completed in the coming months.

### **Public Comments**

Barbara Byrne. Planning and Conservation League (PCL). 1) Procedural point on quantification of objectives related to the terms of art “acceptable” and “sufficient”. What should be quantified and how? Before the workgroups quantify biological objectives, SC should develop an objective standard. PCL would like to see that standard reviewed by outside entities. 2) With respect to variability and uncertainty in models, keep in mind that error propagates and can compound.

### **Attendees**

#### *Management and representatives*

Karen Scarborough (Chair, The Resources Agency)  
Marc Ebbin (The Resources Agency/DWR)  
Will Stelle (The Resources Agency)  
Cindy Darling (The Resources Agency)  
Tracy Ligon (Santa Clara Valley Water District)  
Ara Azhderian (SLDMWD)  
Roger Patterson (Metropolitan)  
Kenny Watkins (California Farm Bureau Federation)  
Tom Howard (SWRCB)  
Sue Fry (USBR)  
Karla Nemeth (Zone 7)  
Brent Walthall (Kern County Water District)  
Jerry Johns (DWR)  
Richard Roos-Collins (American Rivers/Natural Heritage Institute)  
Kim Delfino (Defenders of Wildlife)  
Cambell Ingram (The Nature Conservancy)  
Ann Hayden (Environmental Defense)  
Gary Bobker (The Bay Institute)  
Leo Winternitz (California Bay-Delta Authority)  
John Cain (NHI)

Russ Strach (NOAA Fisheries)  
John Engbring (USFWS)  
Paul Cylinder (SAIC)  
Carl Wilcox (DFG)  
Laura King Moon (State Water Contractors)

*By phone*

Greg Gartrell (Contra Costa Water District)  
Denise Reed (Lead scientist)  
Jason Peltier (Westlands)  
Chris Scheuring (CFBF)

*Other attendees*

See sign-in sheets